

Bernard Demczuk, Ph.D. - A Biography.

Bernard Demczuk, Ph.D. is a 40-year+ DC resident living in the Shaw community where he has been active in community, corporate, academic, labor and government relations. Since 1998, he has been the Assistant VP for DC government relations at the George Washington University. He retired from GW in 2017 after 19 years of service.

Bernard holds a doctorate in American Studies and African American history and culture from GW (BS, U. of Md.; MS, AU). He lectures widely on Black history and culture, labor history, community relations and governmental policy. Bernard started his career as the Recreational Director at St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Anacostia in 1971. After four years as a Corrections Officer at the DC Jail (1977-1980), where he also taught Black Studies to the inmates, he was promoted to National Political Director for the American Federation of Government Employees Union in 1981 where he directed the union's labor relations with the city until 1989. While at AFGE, he sat on the Metropolitan Labor Council, AFL-CIO's Board of Directors for eight years. In 1989, the local DC AFL-CIO selected him as the "Outstanding Trade Unionist of the Year." Bernard has traveled abroad widely teaching and lecturing on international relations, civil and human rights in Russia, Europe, Africa, the Caribbean, Palestine, Israel, South and Central America and throughout the USA.

In 1989, Bernard joined Jesse Jackson's National Rainbow Coalition as its Labor Director. Before joining the Rainbow, he helped to lead Jesse Jackson's 1984 and 1988 labor strategy in those two Presidential campaigns. From 1992-1998, Mayor Sharon Pratt Kelly and Mayor Marion Barry selected Bernard as the Director of Intergovernmental Relations for the Executive Office of the Mayor (today's Office of Policy and Legislative Affairs) where he was the chief lobbyist for the Mayor to the City Council, US Congress and White House.

Bernard retired from city government in 1998. He sits on the board of directors of the DC Chamber of Commerce, the Legislative Affairs Committee of the Board of Trade, the Ben's Chili Bowl Foundation and numerous other boards.

He is Ben's Chili Bowl's historian and the resident historian of the Howard Theatre. Bernard has taught African American history and culture at the DCPS School Without Walls for 14 years and is the faculty advisor of the George Washington Williams House (The Black House) at GW. He lectures frequently on DC Black history and culture for the DC government, community and corporate groups. He is the Black Broadway on U film project's historian.

Bernard has been the recipient of many awards while at GWU since 1998:

2003: The GW Award - the highest honor GW bestows on a student, faculty and staff for outstanding contributions to the university. 2010: The Martin Luther King, Jr. Award - the highest honor bestowed on a student, faculty and staff for outstanding service to the People of Color Community. 2103: The Whitney M. Young Award - the Outstanding Community Service Award by the Greater Washington Urban League's 75th Anniversary Gala. 2016: The BSU Professor of the Year Award - bestowed by the GW Black Student Union (BSU) for outstanding academic service to the GW BSU Community. 2016: The Outstanding Community Service Award - presented by The Ben's Chili Bowl Foundation Annual Gala. 2016: Outstanding Recognition Award - from the DC Chamber of Commerce.

As Ben's Chili Bowl's official historian, Dr. Demczuk can be found at his "Open Table" office in Ben's Chili Bowl at 1213 U Street, NW every Thursday-Saturday mornings from 10am - 12noon offering free Black history and culture talks and tours to anyone who wants to listen and learn. Email ahead at bdemczuk@gwu.edu or call at 202.251.1975 to alert him of your interest. His motto is an old African proverb symbolized by the Sankofa bird: "Know thy history, know thyself."

Bernard's scholarly expertise and his courses are:

- 1.A Survey of African American History & Culture: 500 Hundred Years: The Black Experience in America from African Kingdoms to Black Lives Matters through Text, Film, Music, Religion, Cuisine, Fashion, Language and Sports.
- 2.Classic Black Cinema: From West Africa to Compton - Black Life & Society Through Film.
- 3.DC Black History & Culture: From Slave Quarters on the Potomac to America's Black Broadway on U Street.
- 4.From Slavery to Freedom in the Chesapeake Region: The Black History of the Eastern Shore of Maryland.

Bernard is a jazz and blues enthusiast, gardener, chef, art collector, bass angler and very proud father to his 19year-old son, Che Marley Demczuk, who is a Freshman at Xavier University in New Orleans.

Bernard assists his son with a scholarship program that provides 20 scholarships to elementary school boys in Le Cap Haitien, Haiti where they travel yearly to meet with the young scholars in Le Cap.

Author: Unionville: Race, Place, Time and Memory in Talbot County, Maryland, 1634-1892. Ph.D. published dissertation, 2009.Author: Numerous articles in magazines and newspapers.

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